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ABSTRACT

A study examined the attitudes of home economics teachers, guidance counselors, and principals toward vocational home economics programs. During the study, researchers administered a pilot-tested questionnaire to home economics teachers, principals, and guidance counselors at 182 secondary schools throughout Louisiana in 1982-83. Based on usable responses received from 32 percent of those receiving questionnaires, the researchers concluded that the respondents did not appear to be biased in their perceptions of home economics students, whether male or female. When advising students to take home economics classes, nine of those interviewed felt that the students' sex was an important factor to consider. The findings did indicate, however, that females were more frequently encouraged to take home economics courses than were males, and this did reflect sex bias. The researchers suggested that this contradiction may indicate that, although the respondents recognize that sex should not affect a student's decision to take home economics, they nevertheless remain biased by a student's sex when they actually recommend courses. Because the respondents mentioned peer attitude and stereotypic views of home economics as the main reasons why more males do not enroll in home economics courses, the researchers recommended that efforts to increase male enrollment in home economics focus on altering students' attitudes and on communicating the content of home economics accurately. (The survey instrument is appended.) (MN)

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SEX STEREOTYPING AND SEX BIAS:
A Study of Educator's' Attitudes Toward Vocational Home Economics Programs

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SEX STEREOTYPING AND SEX BIAS: A STUDY OF EDUCATORS' ATTITUDES TOWARD VOCATIONAL HOME ECONOMICS PROGRAMS

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INTRODUCTION

The advent of Title IX, Educational Amendments of 1976, and the use of schools as agents of social change have resulted in attention focusing on sex role stereotyping in educational programs. Vocational education programs, especially, have been under fire for the predominance of certain sexes in certain courses. Enrollment patterns have reflected that males take agriculture, trade and industry, industrial arts, while women enroll in home economics and in vocational business courses. In the past it was frequently assumed that boys took industrial arts while girls took home economics. This practice of tracking students into courses as a result of their sex perpetuated societal views of the role of women and men in society.

With the advent of Title IX, schools receiving Federal funds were required to remove discriminatory policies which limited certain sexes to certain courses. This Federal legislation gave birth to numerous programs designed to acquaint educators with various forms of sex bias and sex stereotyping behavior. The majority of the literature about this topic tended to aim at opening options for females. Women were encouraged to explore traditional male occupations. Some programs were designed to also include males in traditionally female occupations but these were more limited in number. It seemed that programs were primarily designed to open doors into traditionally male fields, and relatively few programs were aimed to encourage men to enter traditionally female occupations.

Vetter, Burkhardt, and Sechler (1978) contend that because women are doing the majority of the research on sex bias and sex stereotyping there are more materials available on new directions for change for

women. Indeed, examination of any list of resources for sex equity contains an overwhelming number of materials to encourage females to enter nontraditional fields with little recruitment information for males entering nontraditional fields.

Males have always been enrolled in home economics courses in small numbers. In the beginning of the home economics movement men were involved (East, 1980). In fact the first editor of the Journal of Home Economics was a male. During times of liberal societal orientation, the number of men in home economics has increased, and during conservative societal orientation their numbers have declined.

Within Louisiana, efforts have been made at all levels to ensure that male and female students are enrolled in vocational education courses. Programs have been conducted and literature written for principals, home economics teachers, and guidance counselors to inform them about ways to avoid sex role stereotyping and bias (Gentry, 1979; Joseph & Jones, no date). However, recent data indicate that only 15 percent of the students enrolled in home economics in Louisiana are male (Leonard, 1982). Nonprerequisite semester courses have been encouraged throughout the State in order to provide a background in home economics to a wider audience.

The motivation for encouraging males to enroll in home economics courses is twofold. First, males who are exposed to the content areas of home economics may then choose to pursue any number of career opportunities in the field of home economics. The second reason for encouraging males to enroll in home economics courses is to provide learning experiences that focus on improving the quality of life through family relationships and management skills. Traditionally females have been educated in effective time, resource and energy management

within the home and in the dynamics of family relationships. Current trends in our society suggest that these skills are also crucial to males.

Background of the Problem

The literature reviewed for this study focused on research and programs conducted for administrators, guidance counselors, and vocational teachers, especially in home economics. The majority of the literature focused on workshops and programs sponsored for vocational educators and other school personnel. The research also focused more on women in nontraditional fields rather than men in nontraditional fields.

Sex Bias and Stereotyping in Education. Johnson (1980) reviewed literature on sex bias and stereotyping. The results of the review indicated that sex bias and stereotyping existed in homes and schools and influenced the career choices of men and women. She saw schools perpetuating bias through structural processes, curriculum and textbooks, scientific fields, and athletics. The traditional roles of boys playing sports while girls cheerlead, the football heroes and the homecoming queens, and the fact that only 3 percent of the school administrators are female continue to be structural processes within schools that reinforce traditional roles for males and females.

Lacy (1979) reported research that examined the sex-role bias of educators as compared with other occupational groups in the United States. Lacy criticized much of the research on sex-role attitudes because of limited sample sizes and the narrow ranges of samples selected. As a result, he selected a nationwide sample to measure sex-role attitudes in the following areas: home, school, work, and politics. His study confirmed other research which showed that lower and working class respondents were more biased against equal

opportunities for women. Lacy also found teachers and administrators more like other professionals, managers, and administrators. There were some areas in which all groups were prejudiced against equal rights for women. These opinions were (1) women should help spouses in their careers rather than pursuing their own careers, and (2) mothers of preschool children should not work. Almost two-fifths of the teachers and over half of the other professionals did not think that women should work when jobs were limited (Lacy, 1979).

Interestingly, Lacy also found differences between elementary and secondary teachers, although these differences were not statistically significant. Consistently, elementary teachers were more prejudiced in their sex-role attitudes than secondary teachers with no correlation between sex and sex-role prejudice. It should be noted that most studies of sex roles pertain to females assuming traditionally male roles with few concerns regarding males assuming traditionally female roles.

Jacko (1981) assessed awareness, attitudes, and classroom behaviors regarding sex-role stereotyping of 86 kindergarten through twelfth grade teachers. These rural teachers were more aware of sex-role stereotyping in society than in classrooms. Male teachers had less positive attitudes than female teachers concerning interest in sex-role stereotyping and its importance in improving education. These men were aware of the need for both men and women to have choices in careers but were less aware of the psychological and cognitive factors of sex-role stereotyping on self-esteem and academic potential. Age, teaching level, and teaching experience were not related to attitudes, awareness, or behaviors.

Indeed, men may not think they have as much to gain in reexamining sex roles in society. Sex-role status has traditionally been defined by masculine values, so the broadening of sex-role values may lead

to a perceived loss of status and power for men while increasing status and power for women. Spence, Helmreich, and Stapp (1974) developed a Personal Attributes Questionnaire which examined both expressive and instrumental behaviors of men and women. Expressive behaviors tend to be more characteristic of women and to reflect concern for others and emotional reactivity. On the other hand, instrumental behaviors which are typically considered more masculine relate to methods of coping with the outside environment and getting things accomplished. Spence et al. (1974) believed that socially desirable behaviors include aspects of both masculine and feminine traits; people with both traits are refered to as androgynous individuals.

A study of high school students showed that 61 percent of the girls had considered nontraditional career options with only 13 percent of the males considering a nontraditional career (Veres and Carmichael, 1982). Smith (1977) argued that stereotypes that restrict men to only those behaviors that are perceived as masculine are detrimental to men as well as women.

Sex Bias and Stereotyping in Home Economics. Many of the studies in vocational education that have involved sex equity or sex-role attitudes have been done by home economists (Cunningham, 1979; Dittman, 1976; Eversole, 1977; Farris, 1982; Murray, 1981). Studies of home economics teachers' perceptions of sex appropriate behaviors showed home economics teachers holding more nontraditional attitudes than other vocational educators (Farris, 1982; Eversole 1977; Cunningham 1979).

Burge and Cunningham (1982) surveyed home economics teachers in West Virginia and compared results with those of a study of home economics teachers in Missouri. Their findings supported the hypothesis

that home economics teachers hold nontraditional sex-role attitudes, and there were no differences between the home economics teachers in Missouri and West Virginia with regard to sex-role attitudes. However, Burge and Cunningham (1982) did find that home economics teachers held more traditional attitudes in the area of family roles than in roles outside the family. Results from the study indicate that the home economics teachers thought it was important for women with preschool children not to work. On the other hand, the home economics teachers supported equal pay for equal work. These researchers concluded that home economics teachers might be preparing students for equal roles in the work force but not in the family. Burge and Cunningham (1982) contend that this may be sending a mixed message: women are expected to participate in paid employment without any decrease in the responsibilities of the home. They found that urban and rural teachers were not any different in their values; however, younger teachers were more nontraditional than older teachers.

In a historical review of men in secondary home economics programs Lawson (1977) developed the following generalizations:

> The nature and degree of participation of males in home economics education has been largely determined by the prevailing social climate...
>
> Male participation in home economics at the secondary level has been marginal and has shown relatively little improvement over time...
>
> Home Economics educators have continued to see the male role as novel and have been unaware of the profession's previous attempts to include males...
>
> When offered to boys, high school home economics courses have been assigned different titles, structure, and content from those offered to girls...
>
> The enhancement and maintenance of "family life" has been the most common justification for including males in the home economics programs...
>
> Home economics programs have continued to reinforce traditional sex-role stereotypes (Lawson, 1977, pp. 223-233).

Career Choices for Men and Women. After reviewing the research, Veres and Carmichael (1982) conclude that parents, same sex peers, opposite sex peers, and school personnel rank as effective sources of influence on students' occupational decisions:

> Four out of five students believed that a future job should offer a good salary. The second ranked reason was the chance for the person to use his or her particular abilities or skills, chosen by just over one-half of the students. While both male and female students agreed on these two top-ranked qualities of a job, they differed on the third and fourth-ranked reasons. Female students named working with people and helping other people as next in importance. Males said that promotions and flexible hours were next. (Veres, 1982, p. 4)

When parents were surveyed about the characteristics of an occupation for young people, mothers and fathers gave basically the same advice to boys and girls. Ninety percent of the parents ranked a good salary and the chance to use one's abilities and skills as top priority. The opportunity for promotions was ranked third (Veres and Carmichael, 1982, p. 7).

Parents were reported to be the major influence on students' career development (Johnson, 1980). Outside the family, teachers were listed as next influential with counselors in schools also mentioned as potential persons influencing career choices. However, guidance counselors were not seen as taking the lead in working with students on their choices for careers. This same report saw schools perpetuating the status quo instead of acting as agents of social change with regard to sex-role stereotyping.

Vetter (1979) reviewed studies on factors influencing nontraditional enrollments in vocational education. Some of their recommendations were the following: (1) more information needed to be made available on the concerns and needs of boys in nontraditional fields, (2) encouragement and support of students in nontraditional areas was needed,

(3) efforts needed to focus on increasing enrollment by helping students choose programs based on interests and possible employment, (4) all school personnel needed to expand their awareness of sex stereotyping and its effects, and (5) students, parents, and members of the community needed to be aware of sex stereotyping and how to eliminate it.

Statement of the Problem

This study was concerned with the perceptions of home economics teachers, guidance counselors, and principals with regard to sex role orientation, attitudes towards males and females who take home economics, and attitudes toward career opportunities for males and females in home economics.

Specific Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives for the study were as follows:

1. To assess home economics teachers, guidance counselors, and principals with regard to their--

(a) perceptions of the sex-role orientation of students,

(b) responses when advising students into home economics courses,

(c) perceptions of vocational home economics curricula, and

(d) perceptions of career opportunities in home economics.

2. To determine if sex biases exist among high school home economics teachers, guidance counselors, and/or principals, and

3. To develop printed materials that address any sex biases that are revealed in the research.

The goal of the research project was to investigate the attitudes of high school home economics teachers, guidance counselors, and principals regarding sex stereotyping and the field of home economics in Louisiana. For purposes of this study, sex bias was reflected under the following conditions:

(a) when respondents viewed students in home economics as more expressive (feminine) and less instrumental (masculine) than students who did not take home economics,

(b) when respondents more frequently advised female students than male students to take home economics,

(c) when respondents viewed home economics as primarily homemaking skills oriented, and

(d) when respondents viewed job opportunities for females in home economics to be greater than job opportunities for males.

The ultimate goal is for the research data to be used to provide educators with insights about roles teachers, guidance counselors, and principals play in reducing or perpetuating sex biases in vocational home economics programs. If barriers to sex equity are identified among this group, in-service program directors could use the research findings and focus specifically on areas of reducing sex biases.

Procedures of the Study

The questionnaires for the study were developed after examining several existing surveys (Handley & Walker, 1978; Livingston, 1981; Spence et al., 1974; Veres, 1982). Parts of each of these were adapted to the research questions in this study. The instruments for each group (home economics teachers, principals, and guidance counselors) were the same.

Pilot Test

After the questionnaire was developed, it was administered to 22 graduate students in a summer course. The results of the pilot test provided information about questions that needed to be reworded or revised. Additional questions for the home economics teachers on the courses they taught and the number of boys and girls enrolled in each course were added after the pilot test.

State Department of Education personnel examined the survey and recommended some open-ended statements to obtain descriptive data about efforts to reduce sex bias. The survey was also reviewed by a panel of consultants composed of a principal, guidance counselor, and home economics teacher. See Appendix A for copies of the questionnaires.

Population and Sample

The population for the study included all secondary schools in Louisiana in 1982-83. The Office of Research and Development in Baton Rouge identified a random sample of Louisiana schools having grades 9 through 12 stratified according to congressional district and size of school. A proportional number of small, medium, and large schools was included in the sample. Each home economics teacher, guidance counselor, and one principal at each school received a questionnaire. From the total of 200 schools selected, 18 were later disqualified as they were private or one-sex schools (all boys or all girls).

A total of 683 questionnaires was mailed. Two hundred and sixty-nine questionnaires were returned. Forty-nine of the 269 returned questionnaires were discarded because the surveys were incomplete. This decreased the return rate from 39 to 32 percent. Responses were received from either the principal, home economics teacher, or guidance counselor of 132 schools or 73 percent of the 182 schools surveyed. Table 1 gives the return rate of complete questionnaires for each of the groups surveyed.

Data Collection

Permission for the study was granted by the Human Subjects Committee at Louisiana Tech University after a letter describing the procedures for conducting the study was submitted to the Human Subjects Committee.

Table 1. Number and Percent of Complete Questionnaires Returned

	Number Sent	Number Returned	Percent Returned
Home Economics Teachers	262	72	27
Guidance Counselors	232	83	36
Principals	189	65	34
TOTAL	683	220	32

A cover letter and stamped self-addressed return envelope were enclosed with the questionnaire. The questionnaires were mailed in the middle of September at the recommendation of the teachers and consultants. This time was thought to be less stressful for teachers as the new year had started but the first grading period was not yet pressing for teachers' and administrators' time.

Findings and Discussion

Demographic Data

The survey requested certain demographic data from each of the respondents. Table 2 summarizes the demographic data about the educators who completed the questionnaire. These statistics indicate that the home economics teachers were fairly young and a majority of the guidance counselors and principals were over the age of 40. Eighty-two percent of the guidance counselors and principals had masters degrees plus 30 hours. Forty-three percent of the home economics teachers had bachelors degrees with the rest holding an advanced degree.

All of the home economics teachers were female, 63 percent of the guidance counselors were female, and only nine or 13.8 percent of the principals were females. The teaching experience ranged from less than five years to more than 20 years for the home economics teachers. Sixty-four percent of the guidance counselors had less than 10 years of experience and 56 percent of the principals had less than 10 years of experience. Years of experience for guidance counselors and principals did not include teaching experience. Seventy-five percent of the home economics teachers were certified in just home economics. The counselors were certified in a variety of subject matter areas. Principals tended to be certified in Physical Education (12 percent),

Table 2. Demographic Data

Demographic Data	Home Ec Teachers		Counselors		Principals	
	Number n=72	Percent	Number n=83	Percent	Number n=65	Percent
AGE						
Under 40	46	64	26	31	14	21
Over 40	26	36	57	69	51	79
DEGREE						
Bachelors	31	43	--	--	--	--
Masters	22	31	15	18	12	19
M+30	17	24	63	76	49	75
Specialist	1	1	4	5	3	5
Doctorate	1	1	1	1	1	1
YEARS OF EXP.						
< 5 years	11	15	23	28	23	35
5-10 years	16	22	30	36	14	22
10-15 years	18	25	13	16	17	26
15-20 years	11	15	12	14	6	9
> 20 years	16	22	4	5	4	6
SEX						
Males	0	0	31	37	56	86
Females	72	100	52	63	9	14

Elementary Education (11 percent), or Physical Education and Social Studies (23 percent).

The schools in the sample represented all sizes. The majority of the schools contained grades 9 through 12. Three-quarters of the schools served students from the middle and lower middle class with 6 percent having upper class students and 15 percent having lower class students.

Perceptions of Sex-Role Orientation

The Personal Attributes Questionnaire (Spence et al., 1974) was used to measure sex-role orientation of male and female high school students. The questionnaire is composed of a list of characteristics. One-third of the characteristics are traditionally associated with masculinity (instrumental characteristics) while one-third of the characteristics are viewed as traditionally representative of femininity (expressive characteristics). The respondents indicated the degree to which four groups of students display each of the characteristics. The four groups were typical male student, typical female student, male student in home economics class, and female student in home economics class.

T-tests were used to determine if the three groups had different perceptions of the typical male high school student and the male who enrolled in home economics. Results indicated that males who take home economics were perceived to be more expressive than males who did not take home economics by home economics teachers, t (1, 69) = 3.69, $p < .001$, guidance counselors, t (1, 80) = 2.18, p .032, and principals, t (1, 61) = 2.43, p .018. Only home economics teachers perceived males who take home economics as more instrumental than typical males, t (1, 69) = 2.04, p .045. The difference on instrumental characteristics between the two groups of males was not

significant for guidance counselors, t (1, 80) = .22, p .828, or principals t (1, 61) = .63, p .528.

The t-tests to determine difference between typical females and females who take home economics indicated that home economics females are perceived as more expressive than typical females by home economics teachers, t = (1, 70) = 3.69, $p < .001$, guidance counselors, t (1, 81) = 4.13, $p < .001$, and principals, t (1, 64) = 2.69, p .009. Home economics females are also perceived as more instrumental than typical females by home economics teachers, t (1, 69) = 3.59, p .001, guidance counselors, t (1, 79) = 3.01, p .004, and principals, t (1, 64) = 2.73, p .008. Table 3 presents the means and standard deviations for each of the four parts of the Personal Attributes Questionnaire.

Advising Students into Home Economics Courses

Three questions were used to determine if the respondents' behavior when advising students to take home economics courses reflected any sex bias. The first question required that respondents indicate the extent to which they believe a factor was important when advising a student to take home economics. The second question requested information on how frequently the respondent recommended home economics courses to males and females. The third question asked the extent to which males and females were encouraged to take home economics.

As reported in Table 4, factors considered important when advising students to take home economics were fairly consistent across all groups. The factor receiving the highest mean rating on a five point scale was a student's desire to major in home economics. In descending order, home economics teachers considered whether or not a student needed an elective or had a personal aptitude in home economics as important

Table 3. Means and Standard Deviations (S.D.) for Measure of Instrumental and Expressive Characteristics (Personal Attributes Questionnaire)

	Home Ec Teachers		Counselors		Principals	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Instrumental Characteristics						
Typical Male	3.10	.56	3.25	.44	3.14	.52
Home Economics Male	3.18	.54	3.24	.48	3.17	.53
Typical Female	2.89	.50	3.12	.35	3.14	.48
Home Economics Female	3.05	.52	3.24	.49	3.27	.47
Expressive Characteristics						
Typical Male	2.87	.54	3.02	.48	3.07	.47
Home Economics Male	2.97	.54	3.10	.49	3.18	.53
Typical Female	3.17	.51	3.32	.53	3.38	.52
Home Economics Female	3.33	.56	3.46	.54	3.50	.54

Table 4. Factors Considered Important in Advising Students to Take Home Economics

Factor	Home Ec Teachers Mean n=72		Counselors Mean n=83		Principals Mean n=65	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Student Desires to Major in Home Ec	4.07	1.26	4.55	.69	4.23	.93
Student Needs an Elective	3.81	1.04	3.68	1.01	3.65	.93
Student Has a Personal Aptitude in Home Ec	3.39	1.26	3.70	1.08	3.66	1.02
Student Needs Individual Attention	3.04	1.35	3.06	1.34	3.20	1.16
Student is Having Problems at Home	2.72	1.27	2.68	1.32	2.86	1.26
Student's Grade Point Average	2.35	1.17	2.49	1.14	2.78	1.08
Student's Sex	2.24	1.29	2.29	1.20	2.64	1.23

Means are based on a 5 point scale with 5 = extremely important to consider, 4 = important to consider, 3 = moderately important to consider, 2 = slightly important to consider, and 1 = not important to consider.

to consider in advising. Principals and guidance counselors reversed the order of these two factors with personal aptitude receiving a higher mean score than needing an elective. The other four items in this scale only received moderate to slightly important ranking by the educators. Grade point average and sex received the lowest ranking by all groups.

Later in the survey respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they recommended home economics courses to males and females. Table 5 gives the means and standard deviations for respondents on these two questions. Although the three groups had indicated that sex was not an important factor to consider when advising students, home economics classes were consistently recommended more often to females than to males by home economics teachers, t (1, 70) = 5.23, $p < .001$, guidance counselors, t (1, 77) = 6.41, $p < .001$, and principals, t (1, 60) = 6.44, $p < .001$. Table 6 gives the frequency of responses for each group.

Respondents were also asked to indicate the number of males and females that were encouraged to enroll in home economics classes. The majority of the respondents in the three groups thought that more females than males were encouraged to enroll in home economics classes (see Table 7). Forty-five percent of the guidance counselors thought the same number of males and females was encouraged while only 18 percent of the home economics teachers and 21 percent of the principals thought the same number of males and females was encouraged to take home economics classes.

Perceptions of Vocational Home Economics Curricula

Three questions were designed to determine the respondents' perceptions of vocational home economics curricula. The first question

Table 5. Means and Standard Deviations (S.D.) for Questions Regarding How Frequently Home Economics Courses Are Recommended to Males and Females

	Home Economics Teachers n=71		Guidance Counselors n=78		Principals n=61	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
How Frequently Home Economics Is Recommended to Females	4.41	.729	4.14	.655	4.16	.814
How Frequently Home Economics Is Recommended to Males	3.76	.948	3.54	.781	3.22	1.031

Based on a five point scale with 5 = very frequently, 4 = frequently, 3 = sometimes, 2 = rarely, 1 = never.

Table 6. Frequency of Responses for Questions Regarding How Frequently Home Economics Courses Are Recommended to Males and Females

Response	Home Economics Teachers		Guidance Counselors		Principals	
	Recommend to Males	Recommend to Females	Recommend to Males	Recommend to Females	Recommend to Males	Recommend to Females
Never Recommend	2.8	--	1.2	--	4.6	--
Rarely	2.8	1.4	4.8	--	16.9	3.1
Sometimes	33.3	9.7	38.6	14.5	36.9	15.4
Frequently	36.1	34.7	42.2	53.0	26.2	40.0
Very Frequently	23.6	52.8	8.4	27.7	10.8	36.9
No Response	1.4	1.4	4.8	4.8	4.6	4.6

Table 7. Frequency of Responses for Question Regarding the Extent to Which Males and Females Are Encouraged to Take Home Economics Courses

Response	Home Economics Teachers	Guidance Counselors	Principals
Many more males	2.8	--	3.1
Few more males	--	4.8	1.5
Same number of males and females	18.1	44.6	21.5
Few more females	29.2	21.7	20.0
Many more females	41.7	25.3	41.5
No response	8.3	3.6	12.3

asked respondents to indicate how they thought students perceived home economics courses when compared with college preparatory courses. Table 8 provides the frequency of responses for the three groups. The majority of respondents thought that students perceived home economics to be easier or much easier than college preparatory courses.

The second question asked the respondents to indicate how often they recommend home economics courses to high versus low academic students. T-tests were used to determine the differences in the means for the home economics teachers, counselors, and principals. Significant differences were found for guidance counselors. Counselors reported recommending home economics courses significantly more often to low academic students, t (1, 80) = 2.62, p .01. There were no significant differences for home economics teachers, t (1, 70) = 1.72, p .09, and principals t (1, 60) = 1.66, p .08. Table 9 presents the means and standard deviations for respondents on the two questions regarding how frequently home economics classes are recommended to low academic and high academic students.

An open-ended question to determine perception of home economics was included on the guidance counselors' and principals' questionnaires. Table 10 gives the frequency of responses for the two groups.

Perceptions of Career Opportunities in Home Economics

Two questions were designed to determine the respondents' perceptions of career opportunities in home economics. Respondents were asked first to indicate their perceptions of job opportunities for a male student who majors in home economics and then for a female student who majors in home economics in college. Chi square was performed to determine if the groups perceived a difference between job opportunities for males and job opportunities for females. The

Table 8. Frequency of Responses for Question Regarding Comparison of College Preparatory Courses and Home Economics Courses

Response	Home Economics Teachers	Guidance Counselors	Principals
Much Easier	35.7	36.6	33.8
Slightly Easier	50.0	43.9	73.8
Not Much Difference	11.4	19.5	0
Slightly More Difficult	2.9	0	0
Much More Difficult	0	0	0

Table 9. Means and Standard Deviations (S.D.) for Questions Regarding How Frequently Home Economics Courses Are Recommended to High and Low Academic Students

	Home Economics Teachers n=70		Guidance Counselors n=79		Principals n=61	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
How Frequently Home Economics Is Recommended to High Academic Students	4.02	.834	3.57	.779	3.59	.938
How Frequently Home Economics Is Recommended to Low Academic Students	3.86	.997	3.85	.735	3.77	.920

Means were based on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 = very frequently, 4 = frequently, 3 = sometimes, 2 = rarely, and 1 = never.

Table 10. Frequency of Responses Regarding Perceptions of Home Economics

Perception	Guidance Counselors (n=79)	Principals (n=61)
Concern for the Family	7.2	4.6
Homemaking	16.8	24.7
Adult Living	40.9	18.4
Should Be Required of All Students	13.3	9.2
No Response	20.5	42.9

results indicate that there was no difference in the distribution of individuals in each category for home economics teachers, X^2 (6) = 49.95, $p < .001$, guidance counselors, X^2 (4) = 42.83, $p < .001$, or principals X^2 (6) = 61.66, $p < .001$. These results indicate that significantly more respondents viewed the job opportunities as being the same for males and females than perceived the opportunities as different.

Although the results do not indicate that educators are biased in their perceptions of available jobs, there was a fairly high percentage of respondents that perceived that there were few jobs available to males in home economics (see Table 11).

Summary and Recommendations

The purpose of the present study was to determine the extent to which principals, guidance counselors and home economics teachers indicate sex bias through the following:

(a) perceptions of the sex role orientations of students who take home economics and those that do not take home economics courses,

(b) attitudes when advising students to enroll in home economics classes,

(c) perceptions of home economics curricula, and

(d) perceptions of career opportunities in home economics.

The respondents' perceptions of the sex-role orientation of home economics students compared with non-home economics students does not indicate sex bias. Sex bias would have been indicated if the home economics students had been viewed as more expressive and less instrumental than non-home economics students. The findings suggest that males and females in home economics are seen as more expressive than non-home economics students. This finding was in the predicted

Table 11. Frequency of Responses for Questions Regarding Jobs Available to Males and Females Who Major in Home Economics

Response	Home Economics Teachers		Guidance Counselors		Principals	
	Jobs Available to Males	Jobs Available to Females	Jobs Available to Males	Jobs Available to Females	Jobs Available to Males	Jobs Available to Females
Unlimited	11.1	16.7	1.2	3.6	1.5	1.5
Fairly large	45.8	56.9	42.2	60.2	29.2	47.7
Very few	33.3	25.0	33.7	28.9	44.6	32.3
No specific jobs	4.2	--	2.4	2.4	--	1.5
Do not know	5.6	1.4	20.5	4.8	24.6	16.9

direction. Since home economics has traditionally been a female-dominated field, it has also been assumed that individuals within the field possess feminine characteristics.

The fact that students were seen as more expressive indicates that they are viewed as more helpful, kind, aware of other's feelings, understanding, and warm in their relationships to others. Traditionally society has viewed such characteristics as appropriate for females but not for males. However, in recent years research has supported the concept of androgyny and the desirability of individuals possessing feminine characteristics regardless of their sex (Bem, 1974, 1975; Spence et al., 1974). Marital satisfaction research also supports the need for expressive characteristics in both the husband and wife (Parelman, 1982).

The males in home economics were seen as equally instrumental by principals and guidance counselors and more instrumental by home economics teachers than males who did not take home economics. Therefore, the males in home economics were not seen as less masculine when they were enrolled in home economics. This would seem to be a significant finding since masculine characteristics are crucial to male's self esteem in adolescence (Learner, Forrell, & Brackney, 1981). In essence, the respondents' perceptions of male's instrumental traits were not adversely affected by their perception of these males possessing a higher degree of expressive traits.

Females enrolled in home economics were seen as more instrumental than those females who did not take home economics. The fact that females are perceived as more instrumental would indicate that home economics females are more competitive, self-confident, independent, and active than females who do not take home economics. These traits

have traditionally been viewed as masculine. However, as in the case of males who possess expressive characteristics, females benefit from having instrumental traits (Bem, 1975). It is interesting to note that students in a traditionally female-dominated area are seen as both more expressive and either equally instrumental or more instrumental than students not enrolled in home economics courses. As mentioned earlier stereotypic perceptions of home economics would suggest that students in home economics courses would be high on expressive and low on instrumental characteristics.

The conclusions that can be drawn from these findings are tentative and clearly indicate the need for further investigation. Educators do not appear to be sex biased in their perceptions of home economics males' and females' sex-role orientation. Since males who take home economics are perceived as more expressive and females in home economics are viewed as more instrumental, it would be interesting to determine if students increase these characteristics as a result of being in home economics classes. Since a combination of instrumental and expressive traits is viewed by many researchers as contributing to positive mental health (Bem, 1975; Jones et al., 1978; Parelman, 1982), it would be beneficial to know if home economics classes contribute to the development of both aspects of sex-role identity.

When advising students to take home economics classes, the three groups did not view the students' sex as an important factor to consider. However, the findings do indicate that females are more frequently encouraged to take home economics than males, and this does reflect sex bias. This contradiction may indicate that the respondents recognize that sex should not affect a student's decision to take home economics, and yet the respondents remain biased by the student's sex when they actually recommend courses.

Even though courses are more frequently recommended to females, it is also interesting to note that over 75 percent of all respondents report that they frequently or very frequently recommend home economics courses to females, and between 35 and 55 percent of the respondents recommend home economics courses to males (see Table 6). Yet, the enrollment in home economics courses has reportedly dropped in recent years. Assuming that the respondents were accurate in their answers, it would appear that students are being encouraged to take home economics, but they are not enrolling in the classes in the same proportion.

When the respondents were asked to indicate why males do not enroll in home economics, peers' attitudes and stereotypic views of home economics were identified as the main reasons. These findings would suggest that the focus of efforts to increase enrollment may be in altering students' attitudes and in communicating the content of home economics accurately. Since more principals either thought of home economics as homemaking skills or did not respond at all, it would seem necessary for the home economics teacher to make special efforts to communicate all aspects of home economics to principals.

The jobs available in a particular field influence a student's selection of a major in college. Although the results did not indicate that the educators were biased in their perceptions of available jobs, there were a fairly high percentage of respondents who perceived that there were few jobs available for males in home economics (see Table 11). Thirty percent of the teachers and counselors thought there were limited job opportunities for males, while 45 percent of the principals perceived the opportunities for males as limited. An additional 25 percent of the principals did not know about the job opportunities for males in

home economics. Sixteen percent of the principals did not know of job opportunities for females in home economics.

A recent study of job opportunities for graduates of home economics programs indicates that in many job arenas the demand will exceed the supply of professionals trained in home economics (Coulter, 1980). It would appear that this information needs to be provided to educators at the high school level since many students make career choices during high school.

The fact that educators did not recommend home economics classes to males as frequently as to females may be affected by the perception of job opportunities. When males are not exposed to the content in home economics they may not have the information to make decisions about careers in home economics. In order for the field to have a more equal number of males and females, males must have the opportunity to evaluate both the content and the career options in the field. Involvement in high school home economics courses may be the primary place where such contacts can occur.

It seems important to provide educators with accurate job information so that they will not restrict males from entering the field at the college level. Publications related to job opportunities as well as in-service programs that focus on these opportunities certainly seem warranted.

In summary, it does appear from the results of the present study that the educators in the sample reflect some degree of sex bias in two of the three areas that were investigated. Future research is warranted to further investigate the sex-role orientation of males and females in home economics. Recommendations for reducing the sex bias that was revealed include attention to student perceptions and

attitudes, principals' understanding of home economics content, and publications and in-service programs related to job opportunities.

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APPENDIX A

Questionnaires

LOUISIANA TECH UNIVERSITY

P.O. BOX 3167

Ruston, LOUISIANA 71272

Dear Home Economics Teacher:

The enclosed questionnaire is part of a statewide survey of vocational education in louisiana. The study will examine various aspects of vocational programs in Louisiana. Your school has been randomly selected to be involved with this study and specifically the section which deals with home economics. The results of the study will be used to focus in-service workshops and training seminars for various administrators, guidance counselors, and vocational educators across the state.

We are enlisting approximately 30 minutes of your time to improve the quality of vocational education in Louisiana. Your principal and guidance counselor will receive a similar questionnarie. Please complete your survey separately from them. Your participation in this research is voluntary. When you have finished the survey, return in the self-addressed stamped envelope provided. Your name will be disassociated from any answers you give, so the results will be anonymous.

Your continued involvement in vocational education helps in the lives of numerous students. Your cooperation in this task is only one indicator of the fine role you perform in our educational system. Thank you in advance for contributing to our knowledge about vocational education in Louisiana.

Sincerely,

R. M. Sliman
Research Assistant

HOME ECONOMICS TEACHER

DIRECTIONS: This survey is divided into two parts, background information and descriptive information about the school. Some of the questions ask for facts while others ask for your opinion. After reading each question, place the appropriate answer on the space provided. Even though you may not know exact answers for some of the questions, please give your best estimation. The column numbers on the left will be used for data analysis; therefore, ignore them when answering questions.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

_____ What is your sex?
1. Male
2. Female

_____ How old are you?
1. Under 30
2. 30-40
3. 41-50
4. 51-60
5. Over 60

_____ What is your highest degree?
1. Less than a bachelor's
2. bachelor's degree
3. master's degree
4. master's plus 30
5. specialist
6. doctorate

List area(s) of study for each degree you hold; e.g. B.S. math education, M.S. supervision.

_____
_____
_____

List certification you presently hold.

_____
_____
_____

_____ How many years have you been a home economics teacher?
1. five years or less
2. more than five years and less than ten years
3. ten years and less than fifteen years
4. fifteen years and less than twenty
5. twenty years or more

_____ Indicate your race/ethnic origin.
1. Caucasian
2. Black
3. Other

DESCRIPTIVE DATA ABOUT THE SCHOOL

_____ What is the approximate size of the community in which the majority of students who attend your school live? (Choose only one.)
1. less than 10,000 - rural
2. 10,000 to 50,000 - small towns
3. 50,000 to 100,000 - medium sized towns
4. 100,000 to 250,000 - large city
5. over 250,000 - metropolitan

_____ What grades are included in your high school?
1. grades 9-12
2. grades 10-12
3. other (please specify) _____

_____ What is the total approximate enrollment of your high school?
1. Under 250
2. 251-500
3. 501-750
4. 751-1,000
5. 1,001-1,500
6. over 1,500

_____ What is the most common socio-economic background of students in your high school?
1. Lower class
2. Lower middle class
3. Middle class
4. Upper middle class
5. Upper class

_____ How many full-time home economics teachers are there for the high school?

_____ How many part-time home economics teachers are there for the high school?

Indicate the extent to which you feel the following attributes are important to consider when advising a student about home economics. If you do not advise students, answer as though you do.

5--extremely important to consider
4--important to consider
3--moderately important to consider
2--slightly important to consider
1--not important to consider

_____ whether a student needs an elective

_____ whether a student desires to major in home economics

_____ whether a student is male or female

_____ whether a student has a personal aptitude in home economics

_____ whether a student has a low or high grade point average

_____ whether a student is having problems at home

_____ whether a student needs some individual attention

Rank the one who has the most influence in advising students who take home economics classes in your school. Rank starting with 1--person with most influence, 2--person with the next most influence, etc. Rank only those that apply.

Most influence with males	Most influence with females	
_____	_____	Principals
_____	_____	Guidance Counselors
_____	_____	Home Economics Teachers
_____	_____	Non Home Economics Teachers
_____	_____	Parents
_____	_____	Peers
_____	_____	Others, please specify_____

According to predictions, approximately 90% of the girls now in high school will work for pay at some time of their lives, and 60% of the girls will work full time outside their home for at least 30 years. For the majority who will be working, what advice would you give? Indicate how important the following are to consider when girls are choosing an occupation. Use this scale:

5--extremely important to consider
4--considerably important to consider
3--moderately important to consider
2--slightly important to consider
1--not important

_____ Good salary

_____ Chance to work with people

_____ Many jobs are available; there is a lot of steady work

_____ Outdoor work

_____ Chance to work with hands

_____ Other people think the job is important

_____ A chance to use particular abilities and skills

_____ A chance to help other people

_____ Freedom from supervision, being able to work on their own

_____ Helping to make the world a better place to live

_____ Flexible hours or convenient working schedule

Almost all teenage boys anticipate an occupation or job as adults. Yet, not all adult men believe they choose the job that is best for them. Some wish they had prepared for a different occupation. Which of the following are most important for a boy to consider in thinking about an occupation? Use the scale:

5--extremely important to consider
4--considerably important to consider
3--moderately important to consider
2--slightly important to consider
1--not important

_____ Good salary

_____ Chance to work with people

_____ Many jobs are available; there is a lot of steady work

_____ Outdoor work

_____ Chance to work with hands

_____ Other people think the job is important

_____ A chance to help other people

_____ A chance to use particular abilities and skills

_____ Freedom from supervision, being able to work on their own

_____ Helping to make the world a better place to live

_____ Flexible hours or convenient working schedule

_____ How do students perceive home economics courses as compared with other vocational education courses?

1. much easier
2. slightly easier
3. not much difference
4. slightly more difficult
5. much more difficult

Who do you think is primarily responsible for creating the perception about home economics courses as compared to other vocational education courses? Place a 1 in front of the individual you believe has the most influence, and 2 in front of the one who is next, etc. Rank only those that apply.

_____ home economics teacher

_____ guidance counselor

_____ principal

_____ student's peers

_____ non home economics teachers

_____ community/parents

_____ other

_____ How do students perceive home economics courses as compared to college preparatory courses?

1. much easier
2. slightly easier
3. not much difference
4. slightly more difficult
5. much more difficult

Who do you think is primarily responsible for creating this perception about home economics as compared with college prep courses? Place a 1 in front of the individual you believe has the most influence, and 2 in front of the one who is next, etc. Rank only those that apply.

_____ home economics teacher

_____ guidance counselor

_____ principal

_____ student's peers

_____ non home economics teachers

_____ community/parents

_____ other

_____ How many jobs are available to females who major in home economics in college?
1. unlimited job possibilities
2. fairly large number of job possibilities
3. a very few specific job possibilities
4. no specific job possibilities--home economics prepares women to be homemakers
5. do not know

_____ How many jobs are available to males who major in home economics in college?
1. unlimited job possibilities
2. fairly large number of job possibilities
3. a very few specific job possibilities
4. no specific job possibilities--home economics prepares women to be homemakers
5. do not know

The purpose of this question is to determine your perceptions about various groups of students. There is no positive or negative evaluation intended. Use the following rating when indicating how many students in each category exhibit these characteristics:

5--almost all students in this category exhibit this behavior
4--a majority of the students in this category exhibit this behavior
3--some students in this category exhibit this behavior
2--a minority of the students in the category exhibit this behavior
1--hardly any of the students in this category exhibit this behavior

It will be most helpful if you complete the left-hand column separately from the right-hand column.

FEMALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS	CHARACTERISTICS	MALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
_____	CONSCIENTIOUS	_____
_____	COMPETITIVE	_____
_____	GENTLE	_____
_____	HAPPY	_____
_____	CAN MAKE DECISIONS EASILY	_____
_____	HELPFUL TO OTHERS	_____
_____	UNPREDICTABLE	_____
_____	NEVER GIVES UP EASILY	_____
_____	KIND	_____
_____	TRUTHFUL	_____

(Continued on next page)

FEMALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS	CHARACTERISTICS	MALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
_____	SELF-CONFIDENT	_____
_____	AWARE OF FEELINGS OF OTHERS	_____
_____	SINCERE	_____
_____	FEELS SUPERIOR	_____
_____	UNDERSTANDING OF OTHERS	_____
_____	LIKEABLE	_____
_____	STANDS UP WELL UNDER PRESSURE	_____
_____	WARM IN RELATIONS TO OTHERS	_____
_____	HELPFUL	_____
_____	INDEPENDENT	_____
_____	EMOTIONAL	_____
_____	MOODY	_____
_____	ACTIVE	_____
_____	ABLE TO DEVOTE SELF TO OTHERS	_____

The purpose of this question is to determine your perceptions about various groups of students. There is no positive or negative evaluation intended. Use the following rating when indicating how many students in each category exhibit these characteristics:

5--almost all students in this category exhibit this behavior
4--a majority of the students in this category exhibit this behavior
3--some students in this category exhibit this behavior
2--a minority of the students in this category exhibit this behavior
1--hardly any of the students in this category exhibit this behavior

It will be most helpful if you complete the left-hand column separately from the right-hand column. (If no males take home economics, please base rating on how you imagine men who would take home economics to be.)

FEMALE HOME ECONOMICS STUDENTS	CHARACTERISTICS	MALE HOME ECONOMICS STUDENTS
_____	CONSCIENTIOUS	_____
_____	COMPETITIVE	_____
_____	GENTLE	_____
_____	HAPPY	_____
_____	CAN MAKE DECISIONS EASILY	_____
_____	HELPFUL TO OTHERS	_____
_____	UNPREDICTABLE	_____
_____	NEVER GIVES UP EASILY	_____
_____	KIND	_____
_____	TRUTHFUL	_____
_____	SELF-CONFIDENT	_____
_____	AWARE OF FEELINGS OF OTHERS	_____
_____	SINCERE	_____
_____	FEELS SUPERIOR	_____
_____	UNDERSTANDING OF OTHERS	_____
_____	LIKEABLE	_____
_____	STANDS UP WELL UNDERPRESSURE	_____
_____	WARM IN RELATIONS WITH OTHERS	_____

(Continued on next page)

FEMALE HOME ECONOMICS STUDENTS	CHARACTERISTICS	MALE HOME ECONOMICS STUDENTS
_____	HELPFUL	_____
_____	INDEPENDENT	_____
_____	EMOTIONAL	_____
_____	MOODY	_____
_____	ACTIVE	_____
_____	ABLE TO DEVOTE SELF TO OTHERS	_____

What is attracting males to your program?

If males are not enrolled in home economics, please tell why you think they aren't taking home economics courses.

_____ To what extent are males and females encouraged to take home economics courses?

1. many more males than females are encouraged
2. a few more males than females
3. about the same number of males and females
4. a few more females than males
5. many more females than males

Use the following five point scale to answer the next four questions.

1. never
2. rarely
3. sometimes
4. frequently
5. very frequently

_____ How frequently do you recommend home economics courses to males?

_____ How frequently do you recommend home economics courses to females?

_____ How frequently do you recommend home economics courses to high academic students?

_____ How frequently do you recommend home economics courses to low academic students?

What are the names of the home economics courses you teach, the number of males and females in each course, and a brief description of what is taught in each course? ****Star any courses required by all students.

Course Name	Total Number of Students in Course	Number of Females	Number of Males
_____	____	____	____
Give brief description:			
_____	____	____	____
Give brief description:			
_____	____	____	____
Give brief description:			
_____	____	____	____
Give brief description:			
_____	____	____	____
Give brief description:			

Do you have a listing of home economics course titles and descriptions?
_____ yes (If so, please include a copy of the home economics courses.)
_____ no (Request from a person who can provide, if possible.)

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please return in the self-addressed stamped envelope.

LOUISIANA TECH UNIVERSITY

P.O. BOX 3167

Ruston, LOUISIANA 71272

Dear Guidance Counselor:

The enclosed questionnaire is part of a statewide survey of vocational education in louisiana. The study will examine various aspects of vocational programs in Louisiana. Your school has been randomly selected to be involved with this study and specifically the section which deals with home economics. The results of the study will be used to focus in-service workshops and training seminars for various administrators, guidance counselors, and vocational educators across the state.

We are enlisting approximately 30 minutes of your time to improve the quality of vocational education in Louisiana. Your principal and home economics teacher will receive a similar questionnarie. Please complete your survey separately from them. Your participation in this research is voluntary. When you have finished the survey, return in the self-addressed stamped envelope provided. Your name will be disassociated from any answers you give, so the results will be anonymous.

Your continued involvement in vocational education helps in the lives of numerous students. Your cooperation in this task is only one indicator of the fine role you perform in our educational system. Thank you in advance for contributing to our knowledge about vocational education in Louisiana.

Sincerely,

R. M. Sliman
Research Assistant

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

DIRECTIONS: This survey is divided into two parts, background information and descriptive information about the school. Some of the questions ask for facts while others ask for your opinion. After reading each question, place the appropriate answer on the space provided. Even though you may not know exact answers for some of the questions, please give your best estimation. The column numbers on the left will be used for data analysis; therefore, ignore them when answering questions.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

_____ What is your sex?
1. Male
2. Female

_____ How old are you?
1. Under 30
2. 30-40
3. 41-50
4. 51-60
5. Over 60

_____ What is your highest degree?
1. Less than a bachelor's
2. bachelor's degree
3. master's degree
4. master's plus 30
5. specialist
6. doctorate

List area(s) of study for each degree you hold; e.g. B.S. math education, M.S. supervision.

_____
_____
_____

List certification you presently hold.

_____
_____
_____

_____ How many years have you been a guidance counselor?
1. five years or less
2. more than five years and less than ten years
3. ten years and less than fifteen years
4. fifteen years and less than twenty
5. twenty years or more

_____ Indicate your race/ethnic origin.
1. Caucasian
2. Black
3. Other

DESCRIPTIVE DATA ABOUT THE SCHOOL

_____ What is the approximate size of the community in which the majority of students who attend your school live? (Choose only one.)
1. less than 10,000 - rural
2. 10,000 to 50,000 - small towns
3. 50,000 to 100,000 - medium sized towns
4. 100,000 to 250,000 - large city
5. over 250,000 - metropolitan

_____ What grades are included in your high school?
1. grades 9-12
2. grades 10-12
3. other (please specify) _____

_____ What is the total approximate enrollment of your high school?
1. Under 250
2. 251-500
3. 501-750
4. 751-1,000
5. 1,001-1,500
6. over 1,500

_____ What is the most common socio-economic background of students in your high school?
1. Lower class
2. Lower middle class
3. Middle class
4. Upper middle class
5. Upper class

_____ How many full-time guidance counselors are there for the high school?

_____ How many part-time guidance counselors teachers are there for the high school?

_____ How many students do you advise each year? (Advise in this survey refers to assisting students on a one-to-one basis in selecting courses to take or careers to enter.)
1. None
2. 1 to 100
3. 101 to 200
4. 201 to 400
5. more than 400

_____ What portion of your time do you spend advising students with regard to courses to take or careers to enter?
1. 5 hours or less per week
2. 6-15 hours per week
3. 16-25 hours per week
4. 26-35 hours per week
5. more than 35 hours per week

Indicate the extent to which you feel the following attributes are important to consider when advising a student about home economics. If you do not advise students, answer as though you do.

5--extremely important to consider
4--important to consider
3--moderately important to consider
2--slightly important to consider
1--not important to consider

_____ whether a student needs an elective

_____ whether a student desires to major in home economics

_____ whether a student is male or female

_____ whether a student has a personal aptitude in home economics

_____ whether a student has a low or high grade point average

_____ whether a student is having problems at home

_____ whether a student needs some individual attention

Rank the one who has the most influence in advising students who take home economics classes in your school. Rank starting with 1--person with most influence, 2--person with the next most influence, etc. Rank only those that apply.

Most influence with males	Most influence with females	
_____	_____	Principals
_____	_____	Guidance Counselors
_____	_____	Home Economics Teachers
_____	_____	Non-Home Economics Teachers
_____	_____	Parents
_____	_____	Peers
_____	_____	Others, please specify_____

According to predictions, approximately 90% of the girls now in high school will work for pay at some time of their lives, and 60% of the girls will work full time outside their home for at least 30 years. For the majority who will be working, what advice would you give? Indicate how important the following are to consider when girls are choosing an occupation. Use this scale:

5--extremely important to consider
4--considerably important to consider
3--moderately important to consider
2--slightly important to consider
1--not important

_____ Good salary

_____ Chance to work with people

_____ Many jobs are available; there is a lot of steady work

_____ Outdoor work

_____ Chance to work with hands

_____ Other people think the job is important

_____ A chance to use particular abilities and skills

_____ A chance to help other people

_____ Freedom from supervision, being able to work on their own

_____ Helping to make the world a better place to live

_____ Flexible hours or convenient working schedule

Almost all teenage boys anticipate an occupation or job as adults. Yet, not all adult men believe they choose the job that is best for them. Some wish they had prepared for a different occupation. Which of the following are most important for a boy to consider in thinking about an occupation? Use the scale:

5--extremely important to consider
4--considerably important to consider
3--moderately important to consider
2--slightly important to consider
1--not important

_____ Good salary

_____ Chance to work with people

_____ Many jobs are available; there is a lot of steady work

_____ Outdoor work

_____ Chance to work with hands

_____ Other people think the job is important

_____ A chance to help other people

_____ A chance to use particular abilities and skills

_____ Freedom from supervision, being able to work on their own

_____ Helping to make the world a better place to live

_____ Flexible hours or convenient working schedule

_____ How do students perceive home economics courses as compared with other vocational education courses?

1. much easier
2. slightly easier
3. not much difference
4. slightly more difficult
5. much more difficult

Who do you think is primarily responsible for creating the perception about home economics courses as compared with other vocational education courses? Place a 1 in front of the individual you believe has the most influence, and 2 in front of the one who is next, etc. Rank only those that apply.

_____ home economics teacher

_____ guidance counselor

_____ principal

_____ student's peers

_____ non-home economics teachers

_____ community/parents

_____ other

_____ How do students perceive home economics courses as compared with college preparatory courses?

1. much easier
2. slightly easier
3. not much difference
4. slightly more difficult
5. much more difficult

Who do you think is primarily responsible for creating this perception about home economics as compared with college prep courses? Place a 1 in front of the individual you believe has the most influence, and 2 in front of the one who is next, etc. Rank only those that apply.

_____ home economics teacher

_____ guidance counselor

_____ principal

_____ student's peers

_____ non-home economics teachers

_____ community/parents

_____ other

_____ How many jobs are available to females who major in home economics in college?
1. unlimited job possibilities
2. fairly large number of job possibilities
3. a very few specific job possibilities
4. no specific job possibilities--home economics prepares women to be homemakers
5. do not know

_____ How many jobs are available to males who major in home economics in college?
1. unlimited job possibilities
2. fairly large number of job possibilities
3. a very few specific job possibilities
4. no specific job possibilities--home economics prepares women to be homemakers
5. do not know

The purpose of this question is to determine your perceptions about various groups of students. There is no positive or negative evaluation intended. Use the following rating when indicating how many students in each category exhibit these characteristics:

5--almost all students in this category exhibit this behavior
4--a majority of the students in this category exhibit this behavior
3--some students in this category exhibit this behavior
2--a minority of the students in the category exhibit this behavior
1--hardly any of the students in this category exhibit this behavior

It will be most helpful if you complete the left-hand column separately from the right-hand column.

FEMALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS	CHARACTERISTICS	MALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
_____	CONSCIENTIOUS	_____
_____	COMPETITIVE	_____
_____	GENTLE	_____
_____	HAPPY	_____
_____	CAN MAKE DECISIONS EASILY	_____
_____	HELPFUL TO OTHERS	_____
_____	UNPREDICTABLE	_____
_____	NEVER GIVES UP EASILY	_____
_____	KIND	_____
_____	TRUTHFUL	_____

(Continued on next page)

FEMALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS	CHARACTERISTICS	MALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
_____	SELF-CONFIDENT	_____
_____	AWARE OF FEELINGS OF OTHERS	_____
_____	SINCERE	_____
_____	FEELS SUPERIOR	_____
_____	UNDERSTANDING OF OTHERS	_____
_____	LIKEABLE	_____
_____	STANDS UP WELL UNDER PRESSURE	_____
_____	WARM IN RELATIONS TO OTHERS	_____
_____	HELPFUI	_____
_____	INDEPENDENT	_____
_____	EMOTIONAL	_____
_____	MOODY	_____
_____	ACTIVE	_____
_____	ABLE TO DEVOTE SELF TO OTHERS	_____

The purpose of this question is to determine your perceptions about various groups of students. There is no positive or negative evaluation intended. Use the following rating when indicating how many students in each category exhibit these characteristics:

5--almost all students in this category exhibit this behavior
4--a majority of the students in this category exhibit this behavior
3--some students in this category exhibit this behavior
2--a minority of the students in this category exhibit this behavior
1--hardly any of the students in this category exhibit this behavior

It will be most helpful if you complete the left-hand column separately from the right-hand column. (If no males take home economics, please base rating on how you imagine men who would take home economics to be.)

FEMALE HOME ECONOMICS STUDENTS	CHARACTERISTICS	MALE HOME ECONOMICS STUDENTS
_____	CONSCIENTIOUS	_____
_____	COMPETITIVE	_____
_____	GENTLE	_____
_____	HAPPY	_____
_____	CAN MAKE DECISIONS EASILY	_____
_____	HELPFUL TO OTHERS	_____
_____	UNPREDICTABLE	_____
_____	NEVER GIVES UP EASILY	_____
_____	KIND	_____
_____	TRUTHFUL	_____
_____	SELF-CONFIDENT	_____
_____	AWARE OF FEELINGS OF OTHERS	_____
_____	SINCERE	_____
_____	FEELS SUPERIOR	_____
_____	UNDERSTANDING OF OTHERS	_____
_____	LIKEABLE	_____
_____	STANDS UP WELL UNDERPRESSURE	_____
_____	WARM IN RELATIONS WITH OTHERS	_____

(Continued on next page)

FEMALE HOME ECONOMICS STUDENTS	CHARACTERISTICS	MALE HOME ECONOMICS STUDENTS
_____	HELPFUL	_____
_____	INDEPENDENT	_____
_____	EMOTIONAL	_____
_____	MOODY	_____
_____	ACTIVE	_____
_____	ABLE TO DEVOTE SELF TO OTHERS	_____

What is attracting males to your program?

If males are not enrolled in home economics, please tell why you think they aren't taking home economics courses.

_____ To what extent are males and females encouraged to take home economics courses?
1. many more males than females are encouraged
2. a few more males than females
3. about the same number of males and females
4. a few more females than males
5. many more females than males

Use the following five point scale to answer the next four questions.
1. never
2. rarely
3. sometimes
4. frequently
5. very frequently

_____ How frequently do you recommend home economics courses to males?

_____ How frequently do you recommend home economics courses to females?

_____ How frequently do you recommend home economics courses to high academic students?

_____ How frequently do you recommend home economics courses to low academic students?

In a brief statement tell what you perceive home economics to be.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please return in the self-addressed stamped envelope.

LOUISIANA TECH UNIVERSITY

P.O. BOX 3167

Ruston, LOUISIANA 71272

Dear Principal:

The enclosed questionnaire is part of a statewide survey of vocational education in louisiana. The study will examine various aspects of vocational programs in Louisiana. Your school has been randomly selected to be involved with this study and specifically the section which deals with home economics. The results of the study will be used to focus in-service workshops and training seminars for various administrators, guidance counselors, and vocational educators across the state.

We are enlisting approximately 30 minutes of your time to improve the quality of vocational education in Louisiana. Your home economics teacher and guidance counselor will receive a similar questionnarie. Please complete your survey separately from them. Your participation in this research is voluntary. When you have finished the survey, return in the self-addressed stamped envelope provided. Your name will be disassociated from any answers you give, so the results will be anonymous.

Your continued involvement in vocational education helps in the lives of numerous students. Your cooperation in this task is only one indicator of the fine role you perform in our educational system. Thank you in advance for contributing to our knowledge about vocational education in Louisiana.

Sincerely,

R. M. Sliman
Research Assistant

PRINCIPAL

PRINCIPAL

DIRECTIONS: This survey is divided into two parts, background information and descriptive information about the school. Some of the questions ask for facts while others ask for your opinion. After reading each question, place the appropriate answer on the space provided. Even though you may not know exact answers for some of the questions, please give your best estimation. The column numbers on the left will be used for data analysis; therefore, ignore them when answering questions.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

_____ What is your sex?
1. Male
2. Female

_____ How old are you?
1. Under 30
2. 30-40
3. 41-50
4. 51-60
5. Over 60

_____ What is your highest degree?
1. Less than a bachelor's
2. bachelor's degree
3. master's degree
4. master's plus 30
5. specialist
6. doctorate

List area(s) of study for each degree you hold; e.g. B.S. math education, M.S. supervision.

_____
_____
_____

List certification you presently hold.

_____
_____
_____

_____ How many years have you been a principal?
1. five years or less
2. more than five years and less than ten years
3. ten years and less than fifteen years
4. fifteen years and less than twenty
5. twenty years or more

_____ Indicate your race/ethnic origin.
1. Caucasian
2. Black
3. Other

DESCRIPTIVE DATA ABOUT THE SCHOOL

_____ What is the approximate size of the community in which the majority of students who attend your school live? (Choose only one.)
1. less than 10,000 - rural
2. 10,000 to 50,000 - small towns
3. 50,000 to 100,000 - medium sized towns
4. 100,000 to 250,000 - large city
5. over 250,000 - metropolitan

_____ What grades are included in your high school?
1. grades 9-12
2. grades 10-12
3. other (please specify) _____

_____ What is the total approximate enrollment of your high school?
1. Under 250
2. 251-500
3. 501-750
4. 751-1,000
5. 1,001-1,500
6. over 1,500

_____ What is the most common socio-economic background of students in your high school?
1. Lower class
2. Lower middle class
3. Middle class
4. Upper middle class
5. Upper class

_____ How many full-time principals are there for the high school?

_____ How many part-time principals teachers are there for the high school?

_____ How many students do you advise each year? (Advise in this survey refers to assisting students on a one-to-one basis in selecting courses to take or careers to enter.)
1. None
2. 1 to 100
3. 101 to 200
4. 201 to 400
5. more than 400

_____ What portion of your time do you spend advising students with regard to courses to take or careers to enter?
1. 5 hours or less per week
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Indicate the extent to which you feel the following attributes are important to consider when advising a student about home economics. If you do not advise students, answer as though you do.

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4--important to consider
3--moderately important to consider
2--slightly important to consider
1--not important to consider

_____ whether a student needs an elective

_____ whether a student desires to major in home economics

_____ whether a student is male or female

_____ whether a student has a personal aptitude in home economics

_____ whether a student has a low or high grade point average

_____ whether a student is having problems at home

_____ whether a student needs some individual attention

Rank the one who has the most influence in advising students who take home economics classes in your school. Rank starting with 1--person with most influence, 2--person with the next most influence, etc. Rank only those that apply.

Most influence with males	Most influence with females	
_____	_____	Principals
_____	_____	Guidance Counselors
_____	_____	Home Economics Teachers
_____	_____	Non-Home Economics Teachers
_____	_____	Parents
_____	_____	Peers
_____	_____	Others, please specify_____

According to predictions, approximately 90% of the girls now in high school will work for pay at some time of their lives, and 60% of the girls will work full time outside their home for at least 30 years. For the majority who will be working, what advice would you give? Indicate how important the following are to consider when girls are choosing an occupation. Use this scale:

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4--considerably important to consider
3--moderately important to consider
2--slightly important to consider
1--not important

_____ Good salary

_____ Chance to work with people

_____ Many jobs are available; there is a lot of steady work

_____ Outdoor work

_____ Chance to work with hands

_____ Other people think the job is important

_____ A chance to use particular abilities and skills

_____ A chance to help other people

_____ Freedom from supervision, being able to work on their own

_____ Helping to make the world a better place to live

_____ Flexible hours or convenient working schedule

Almost all teenage boys anticipate an occupation or job as adults. Yet, not all adult men believe they choose the job that is best for them. Some wish they had prepared for a different occupation. Which of the following are most important for a boy to consider in thinking about an occupation? Use the scale:

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_____ Good salary

_____ Chance to work with people

_____ Many jobs are available; there is a lot of steady work

_____ Outdoor work

_____ Chance to work with hands

_____ Other people think the job is important

_____ A chance to help other people

_____ A chance to use particular abilities and skills

_____ Freedom from supervision, being able to work on their own

_____ Helping to make the world a better place to live

_____ Flexible hours or convenient working schedule

_____ How do students perceive home economics courses as compared with other vocational education courses?
1. much easier
2. slightly easier
3. not much difference
4. slightly more difficult
5. much more difficult

Who do you think is primarily responsible for creating the perception about home economics courses as compared with other vocational education courses? Place a 1 in front of the individual you believe has the most influence, and 2 in front of the one who is next, etc. Rank only those that apply.

_____ home economics teacher

_____ guidance counselor

_____ principal

_____ student's peers

_____ non-home economics teachers

_____ community/parents

_____ other

_____ How do students perceive home economics courses as compared with college preparatory courses?

1. much easier
2. slightly easier
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4. slightly more difficult
5. much more difficult

Who do you think is primarily responsible for creating this perception about home economics as compared with college prep courses? Place a 1 in front of the individual you believe has the most influence, and 2 in front of the one who is next, etc. Rank only those that apply.

_____ home economics teacher

_____ guidance counselor

_____ principal

_____ student's peers

_____ non-home economics teachers

_____ community/parents

_____ other

_____ How many jobs are available to females who major in home economics in college?
1. unlimited job possibilities
2. fairly large number of job possibilities
3. a very few specific job possibilities
4. no specific job possibilities--home economics prepares women to be homemakers
5. do not know

_____ How many jobs are available to males who major in home economics in college?
1. unlimited job possibilities
2. fairly large number of job possibilities
3. a very few specific job possibilities
4. no specific job possibilities--home economics prepares women to be homemakers
5. do not know

The purpose of this question is to determine your perceptions about various groups of students. There is no positive or negative evaluation intended. Use the following rating when indicating how many students in each category exhibit these characteristics:

5--almost all students in this category exhibit this behavior
4--a majority of the students in this category exhibit this behavior
3--some students in this category exhibit this behavior
2--a minority of the students in the category exhibit this behavior
1--hardly any of the students in this category exhibit this behavior

It will be most helpful if you complete the left-hand column separately from the right-hand column.

FEMALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS	CHARACTERISTICS	MALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
_____	CONSCIENTIOUS	_____
_____	COMPETITIVE	_____
_____	GENTLE	_____
_____	HAPPY	_____
_____	CAN MAKE DECISIONS EASILY	_____
_____	HELPFUL TO OTHERS	_____
_____	UNPREDICTABLE	_____
_____	NEVER GIVES UP EASILY	_____
_____	KIND	_____
_____	TRUTHFUL	_____

(Continued on next page)

FEMALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS	CHARACTERISTICS	MALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
_____	SELF-CONFIDENT	_____
_____	AWARE OF FEELINGS OF OTHERS	_____
_____	SINCERE	_____
_____	FEELS SUPERIOR	_____
_____	UNDERSTANDING OF OTHERS	_____
_____	LIKEABLE	_____
_____	STANDS UP WELL UNDER PRESSURE	_____
_____	WARM IN RELATIONS TO OTHERS	_____
_____	HELPFUL	_____
_____	INDEPENDENT	_____
_____	EMOTIONAL	_____
_____	MOODY	_____
_____	ACTIVE	_____
_____	ABLE TO DEVOTE SELF TO OTHERS	_____

The purpose of this question is to determine your perceptions about various groups of students. There is no positive or negative evaluation intended. Use the following rating when indicating how many students in each category exhibit these characteristics:

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2--a minority of the students in this category exhibit this behavior
1--hardly any of the students in this category exhibit this behavior

It will be most helpful if you complete the left-hand column separately from the right-hand column. (If no males take home economics, please base rating on how you imagine men who would take home economics to be.)

FEMALE HOME ECONOMICS STUDENTS	CHARACTERISTICS	MALE HOME ECONOMICS STUDENTS
_____	CONSCIENTIOUS	_____
_____	COMPETITIVE	_____
_____	GENTLE	_____
_____	HAPPY	_____
_____	CAN MAKE DECISIONS EASILY	_____
_____	HELPFUL TO OTHERS	_____
_____	UNPREDICTABLE	_____
_____	NEVER GIVES UP EASILY	_____
_____	KIND	_____
_____	TRUTHFUL	_____
_____	SELF-CONFIDENT	_____
_____	AWARE OF FEELINGS OF OTHERS	_____
_____	SINCERE	_____
_____	FEELS SUPERIOR	_____
_____	UNDERSTANDING OF OTHERS	_____
_____	LIKEABLE	_____
_____	STANDS UP WELL UNDERPRESSURE	_____
_____	WARM IN RELATIONS WITH OTHERS	_____

(Continued on next page)

FEMALE HOME ECONOMICS STUDENTS	CHARACTERISTICS	MALE HOME ECONOMICS STUDENTS
_____	HELPFUL	_____
_____	INDEPENDENT	_____
_____	EMOTIONAL	_____
_____	MOODY	_____
_____	ACTIVE	_____
_____	ABLE TO DEVOTE SELF TO OTHERS	_____

What is attracting males to your program?

If males are not enrolled in home economics, please tell why you think they aren't taking home economics courses.

_____ To what extent are males and females encouraged to take home economics courses?

1. many more males than females are encouraged
2. a few more males than females
3. about the same number of males and females
4. a few more females than males
5. many more females than males

Use the following five point scale to answer the next four questions.

1. never
2. rarely
3. sometimes
4. frequently
5. very frequently

_____ How frequently do you recommend home economics courses to males?

_____ How frequently do you recommend home economics courses to females?

_____ How frequently do you recommend home economics courses to high academic students?

_____ How frequently do you recommend home economics courses to low academic students?

In a brief statement tell what you perceive home economics to be.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please return in the self-addressed stamped envelope.

APPENDIX B

Content of Flyer

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN LOUISIANA?

The purpose of this study was to determine if sex bias and sex stereotyping existed in the attitudes of principals, guidance counselors, and home economics teachers regarding home economics programs in Louisiana.

Of 683 principals, guidance counselors, and home economics teachers surveyed in 182 randomly selected schools, 220 questionnaires were returned for a return rate of 32 percent. The sample included responses from 74 percent of the schools surveyed.

The study found that although teachers, principals, and counselors said whether or not a person was male or female made little difference when advising someone to take home economics, the sample reported significantly lower frequencies in recommending home economics courses to men. In addition guidance counselors said grade point average made little difference in recommending home economics to students but counselors recommended home economics courses significantly more often to low academic students than to high academic students.

The respondents saw home economics students as more expressive than non-home economics students. This means that students in home economics were viewed as more helpful, kind, aware of others' feelings and warm in their relationships to others. Traditionally society has viewed these traits as appropriate for females but not for males. However, research in recent years indicates that it is desirable for individuals of both sexes to possess these characteristics.

Students in home economics were also viewed as equally instrumental or more instrumental than non-home economics students. This suggests that students in home economics are viewed as more confident, competitive, independent, and active than non-home economics students.

It is interesting to note that students who enroll in a traditionally female-dominated course would be viewed as possessing more masculine characteristics than those students not enrolled.

SUGGESTIONS FOR REDUCING SEX BIAS AND INCREASING ENROLLMENT OF MALES IN HOME ECONOMICS

Within the Classroom

Use nontraditional adult role models. In home economics have males who are single parents and are employed in home economics related occupations or as homemakers speak to classes.

Work on eliminating stereotypes about both men and women not only in the workforce but also in the home.

Adapt materials used in classes to include all sexes and racial groups. Watch for hidden persuaders that may discourage certain sexes.

Have students keep a daily log so teachers can gain perspective on how students are experiencing the course.

Communication Outside the Program

Know the many job opportunities available to both men and women in home economics--in the food service industry, fashion industry, family and child areas, housing, consumer services, etc. Share these job opportunities with other school personnel, students, parents, and the general public.

Recognize that people respect a program when they know about it. Communicate the benefit of the program to the students, parents, community and other teachers in the school.

Recognize the pivotal role of counselors. Be sure counselors and administrators are cognizant of the goals of the program and see value in those goals for all students regardless of sex or academic level.

Suggestions for Recruiting Students

Present programs at schools that send students to your school to help learners feel comfortable in home economics programs and to understand long-term advantages of careers and courses in the field of home economics.

Use the power of peers in recruitment by using students of both sexes in recruiting and advising students into home economics classes.

Use the power of the press and mass media. Articles in the paper on the importance of home economics for both men and women may be beneficial.

Recruit class leaders in person or on the telephone. This provides instant feedback and allows individual responses to people.

Recruit male students in large numbers. The larger the number of males, the greater the likelihood they will stay in the course.

WHAT IS ATTRACTING MALES TO HOME ECONOMICS?

In Louisiana only 15 percent of the students enrolled in home economics are males. The percent of respondents in the groups surveyed in this study reported the following reasons for males taking home economics:

Home Economics Teachers

(25 percent) foods classes

(15 percent) increased need for learning to be independent

(14 percent) semester courses

(13 percent) interesting course content

Principals

(20 percent) good teachers

(12 percent) semester courses

(11 percent) interesting course content

Guidance Counselors

(15 percent) semester courses

(15 percent) increased need for learning to be independent

(12 percent) interesting course content

WHY ARE MALES NOT ENROLLED IN HOME ECONOMICS?

Home economics teachers and counselors identified peer pressure and peers' attitudes as the reasons why males were not enrolled in home economics. Guidance counselors and principals cited stereotyping attitudes and practices within the schools as additional reasons for men not enrolling in home economics.

WHO HAS THE MOST INFLUENCE IN ADVISING STUDENTS TO TAKE HOME ECONOMICS?

Males

Home economics teachers saw peers having the most influence with males taking home economics classes, guidance counselors report that they had the most influence, and principals identified home economics teachers as the most influential.

Females

Home economics teachers, principals, and counselors all rated the home economics teacher as having the greatest influence in advising females to take home economics.

END

DEPT. OF EDUCATION

NAT'L INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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AUGUST

24 - 1984